

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims replaces all prior versions, and listings of the claims in the application:

Claims 1-21. (Cancelled).

22. (Currently Amended) A patient interface device comprising:

(a) a collar defined from a relatively rigid material, the collar having an aperture defined in a central portion thereof, and a plurality of headgear attachment points disposed at a perimeter of the collar, wherein the aperture is defined in a first plane, and wherein at least one of the plurality of headgear attachment points is defined in a second plane that is disposed at ~~an a~~ non-zero angle with respect to the first plane;

(b) an elbow coupling rotatably attached to the collar such that the elbow coupling rotates relative to the collar; and

(c) a cushion defined from a pliable material, having a generally triangular shape, and operatively attached to the collar such that the elbow coupling and the cushion are disposed on opposite sides of the collar, wherein a nose receiving cavity is defined in the cushion, and wherein the cushion comprises:

(1) a proximal portion operatively coupled to the collar and having a first opening defined therein, wherein the first opening and the aperture provide a path for communicating the nose receiving cavity with an interior of the elbow coupling, and

(2) a side wall extending from the proximal portion and terminating generally at a distal portion that is adapted to contact a patient responsive to the patient interface device being donned by a patient, wherein the distal portion includes a second opening defined therein that is sized and configured to receive at least a portion of a nose of such a patient so that nares of such a patient communicate with the nose receiving cavity, and wherein the distal portion of the side wall provides a rounded patient portion.

23. (Previously Presented) The patient interface device according to claim 22, wherein the elbow coupling includes an exhaust port defined therein.

24. (Previously Presented) The patient interface device according to claim 22, wherein the distal portion of the cushion includes an in-turned lip having an edge that is generally turned toward the nose receiving cavity.

25. (Previously Presented) The patient interface device according to claim 22, wherein the collar is arranged and configured such that the plurality of headgear attachment points are maintained in a spaced apart relation from the cushion to minimize contact between headgear straps that are attachable to the collar at the plurality of headgear attachment points and the cushion responsive to the patient interface device, including such headgear straps, being donned by a patient.

26. (Previously Presented) The patient interface device according to claim 22, wherein the distal portion is contoured to correspond to a facial structure of a human.

27. (Previously Presented) The patient interface device according to claim 22, wherein the elbow coupling includes a substantially ninety degree bend and an exhaust port defined therein.

28. (Previously Presented) The patient interface device according to claim 22, wherein the cushion is sized such that an uppermost portion of the distal portion overlies a nose of a patient, and a lowermost portion of the distal portion overlies area of such a patient above an upper lip and below such a patient's nares, responsive to the patient interface device being donned by such a patient.

29. (Previously Presented) The patient interface device according to claim 22, wherein the side wall includes a reinforcement area of increased thickness, wherein the reinforcement area is integrally formed on the side walls and extends around a perimeter of the cushion, and wherein the reinforcement area includes a first saddle shaped portion disposed on a first side of the cushion generally proximate to the distal portion and a second saddle shaped portion disposed on a second side of the cushion also generally proximate to the distal portion, wherein each of the first and the second saddle shaped portions includes a plurality of protrusions extending from the second end portion with a notch therebetween, and wherein a distal edge of the reinforcement area is continuous and spans a circumference of the cushion.

30. (Withdrawn) A system for delivering a breathing gas to a patient, comprising:

(a) a gas flow generating device that produces a flow of gas;

(b) a conduit having a first end portion operatively coupled to the gas flow generating device and a second end portion, wherein the conduit carries the flow of gas from the gas flow generating device during operation of the system; and

(c) a patient interface device operatively coupled to the second end portion of the conduit, the patient interface device comprising:

(1) a collar defined from a relatively rigid material, the collar having an aperture defined in a central portion thereof, and a plurality of headgear attachment points disposed at a perimeter of the collar, wherein the aperture is defined in a first plane, and wherein at least one of the plurality of headgear attachment points is defined in a second plane that is disposed at an angle with respect to the first plane;

(2) an elbow coupling rotatably attached to the collar such that the elbow coupling rotates relative to the collar; and

(3) a cushion defined from a pliable material, having a generally triangular shape, and operatively attached to the collar such that the elbow coupling and the cushion

are disposed on opposite sides of the collar, wherein a nose receiving cavity is defined in the cushion, and wherein the cushion comprises:

(i) a proximal portion operatively coupled to the collar and having a first opening defined therein, wherein the first opening and the aperture provide a path for communicating the nose receiving cavity with an interior of the elbow coupling, and

(ii) a side wall extending from the proximal portion and terminating generally at a distal portion that is adapted to contact a patient responsive to the patient interface device being donned by a patient, wherein the distal portion includes a second opening defined therein that is sized and configured to receive at least a portion of a nose of such a patient so that nares of such a patient communicate with the nose receiving cavity, and wherein the distal portion of the side wall provides a rounded patient portion.

31. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 30, wherein the elbow coupling includes an exhaust port defined therein.

32. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 30, wherein the distal portion of the cushion includes an in-turned lip having an edge that is generally turned toward the nose receiving cavity.

33. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 30, wherein the collar is arranged and configured such that the plurality of headgear attachment points are maintained in a spaced apart relation from the cushion to minimize contact between headgear straps that are attachable to the collar at the plurality of headgear attachment points and the cushion responsive to the patient interface device, including such headgear straps, being donned by a patient.

34. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 30, wherein the distal portion is contoured to correspond to a facial structure of a human.

35. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 30, wherein the elbow coupling includes a substantially ninety degree bend and an exhaust port defined therein.

36. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 30, wherein the cushion is sized such that an uppermost portion of the distal portion overlies a nose of a patient, and a lowermost portion of the distal portion overlies area of such a patient above an upper lip and below such a patient's nares, responsive to the patient interface device being donned by such a patient.

37. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 30, wherein the side wall includes a reinforcement area of increased thickness, wherein the reinforcement area is integrally formed on the side walls and extends around a perimeter of the cushion, and wherein the reinforcement area includes a first saddle shaped portion disposed on a first side of the cushion generally proximate to the distal portion and a second saddle shaped portion disposed on a second side of the cushion also generally proximate to the distal portion, wherein each of the first and the second saddle shaped portions includes a plurality of protrusions extending from the second end portion with a notch therebetween, and wherein a distal edge of the reinforcement area is continuous and spans a circumference of the cushion.